

Research Directions

Office of Research Services

Taking the Trauma Out of Transitions

A team of researchers from the School of Education - Sue Dockett, Bob Perry, Margaret Vickers, Diana Whitton and Christine Johnston, is researching educational transitions over key timeframes. This research is being funded by the NSW Department of Education and Training and aims to explore other major educational transitions – other than starting school.



Previous research on children's experience of starting school has resulted in a set of guidelines that assist parents and educators achieve this major transition. The current project will test the applicability of these guidelines across other educational transitions, for example: secondary schooling, senior schooling, work and further education.

Researchers will hold focus group discussions with students, parents, educators and other stakeholders from 17 schools in the Sydney region in order to understand their perceptions and experiences of these educational transitions.

Professor Dockett says: 'While every context is different, there are some principles and practices that we can put in place to support people so that these transitions are positive experiences. For example, going to high school is a time of major change highlighting the importance of a child's relationships with their peers, their family and their teachers and while those relationships are equally important when the child moves into senior school, the nature of those relationships will vary. This research will explore how individuals cope with the physical, social and cognitive changes in these key developmental periods.'

As a result of this project, stakeholders will be able to put together programs that address these experiences and allow individuals to manage transitions with less emotional strain.

Project Title: *Extending the "Guidelines for Effective Transition to School Programs" to all educational transitions.*

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